

**CONSERVATION AREA
CHARACTER STATEMENT FOR
MACKERYE END**



February 2001

CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER STATEMENT MACKERYE END

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Civic Amenities Act 1967 empowered local planning authorities to make provision for the preservation and enhancement of areas of architectural and historic interest by designating them as conservation areas. Mackerye End Conservation Area was designated as a conservation area on the 27 July 1977.

1.2 Conservation areas should not be thought of solely as a process of preservation and an impediment to change. The designation of a conservation area represents an opportunity to formulate positive policies to improve and enhance its environmental quality and to ensure the successful integration of any development or redevelopment necessary for its continued success as a living and working community. The St Albans and District Local Plan Review (adopted November 1994) sets out the general principles which will be observed when dealing with applications for new development and redevelopment (Policy 85 – 'Development in Conservation Areas').

1.3 The aims of this Character Statement are to show the way in which the form of the Conservation Area has evolved and to assess its present character; to indicate the principles to be adopted in considering planning applications in the area; and to form a framework within which any detailed proposals may be formulated.

2.0 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Mackerye End is a small rural settlement situated to the north east of Harpenden and west of Gustard Wood. It is situated on a slight hilltop about 122m above sea level and overlooking open undulating countryside with views southwards across Harpenden and north towards Kimpton and North Hertfordshire. The settlement is roughly centred on Mackerye End Farm although the main feature of the conservation area is Mackerye End House a Grade I statutorily listed manor house.

2.2 Mackerye End is in an area that was continuously occupied from the end of the first century BC at least until the end of the early Saxon Period. A Roman villa near Turnershall Farm, 600m east of Mackerye End, is one of the very few local sites, which were demonstrably occupied throughout the Roman period and into the early Saxon. In the early Middle Ages much of the area was common land.

2.3 The manor house at Mackerye End is first referred to at the start of the fourteenth century, when it was already in existence and occupied by William and Sibyl Makaray. In the early fifteenth century their descendants Hugh Bostock and Margaret Makry lived there and their son, John of Wheathampstead, was Abbot of St Albans from 1420-40 and again from 1452-65. The memorial brass to Hugh and Margaret survives in Wheathampstead church. The house finally passed out of the family when it descended

to the adopted daughter of Abbot John's nephew. She married Nicholas Brocket and the house passed to the Brocket family and subsequently to the Hunsdens.

2.4 Thomas Hunsden built, or rebuilt, the existing house in 1665 and inventories survive which give a clue as to the use of the individual rooms. Thomas Hunsden adapted the house so that the servants' and domestic areas were divided off from the family side of the house. In 1681 it was bought by the Garrards and lost its importance, surviving comparatively unaltered as a result.

2.5 At the end of the eighteenth century it is believed that Charles and Mary Lamb visited relatives at Mackerye End Farm and descriptions of it occur in "*Essays of Elia*".

2.6 Mackerye End Farm was built at about the same time as Thomas Hunsden rebuilt the Manor House. It was a superior farm house and may have accommodated some of the estate workers displaced as a result of the re-organisation of Mackerye End House itself.



3.0 DESIGNATIONS

3.1 CONSERVATION AREA (see attached map) - The area incorporating Mackerye End House and surrounding lands and the settlement of Mackerye End was designated a conservation area on 27 July 1977.

3.2 STATUTORY LIST - There are 7 statutory listed buildings in the Conservation Area including Mackerye End House, (grade I), and associated outbuildings and cottages, (grade II), Mackerye End Farm house and associated buildings, and Holly Bush Cottage, (all grade II). These are shown on the attached map.

3.3 LOCALLY LISTED BUILDINGS – These are buildings which the Council feels make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The proposed locally listed buildings are shown on the map at the end of this statement. It is not proposed to locally list any buildings which are statutorily listed or any of their outbuildings which are listed by virtue of being in their curtilage – it is considered that such buildings do contribute positively to the character of this conservation area, and that ‘double’ designation is not necessary (see map).

3.4 METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT – The whole of the Mackerye End Conservation Area is covered by the Metropolitan Green Belt, which is subject to Policy 1 of the District Local Plan. This states that only very specific types of development will be acceptable, and that it should integrate with the existing landscape. Siting, design and external appearance are particularly important and additional landscaping will normally be required. Significant harm to the ecological value of the countryside must be avoided.

4.0 ARCHITECTURAL STYLES AND MATERIALS

4.1 The area has two distinct periods of building phase from the 16th and 17th centuries and the 20th century.

4.2 *Mackerye End House* (grade I) is a large manor house essentially of Jacobean style and date. Evidence suggests that it may have been much altered and rebuilt in 1665 which is shown on a date stone on the right hand side gable. The main (east) front is a charming symmetrical composition in brick dominated by two Dutch gables and two large “Tudor” style chimney stacks.

Mackerye End Farm (grade II) was built during the late 16th or early 17th century. It is timber framed with combed pargetting and a plain tile hipped roof. Its associated farm buildings are generally weatherboarded with plain tile roofs and were built in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Holly Bush Cottage (grade II) is also of a similar date, it appears that originally it was timber framed but at a later date was infilled with brick. It also has a plain tile roof.

4.3 The settlement went through a period of expansion during the 20th century.

The Little Manor was built in 1938 in a Georgian style for George Sparrow and although much extended retains many of its original features. It is built in the local red brick with a hipped plain clay tile roof and has a symmetrical appearance. Metal estate fences, which are a good feature from this period, flank the road entrance in to the property and every effort should be made to preserve them.

Orchard Cottage and Cherry Trees were built in 1945 as agricultural cottages for workers on the Little Manor estate. They are of neutral interest within the area.

Cory Cottage and Wright Cottage. An almost symmetrical pair of cottages built in brick and render with plain tile roof, situated on a sharp bend in the road overlooking open countryside they make a positive contribution and prominent feature in the Conservation Area.

Little Radley was built in the 1970's and although of a modern design it has still been built to blend in with surrounding buildings, however it is of neutral interest within the area.

The Camellias this building is also another relatively modern addition in brick and tile and is of neutral interest in the Conservation Area.

New Cottages. Were built in 1961 as farm workers cottages for Mackerye End Farm and then rebuilt in a pseudo 17th century style in 1999, now known as Manor Farm.

5.0 BUILDING MATERIALS

5.1 The unity of the village is created by the use of traditional and natural building materials including the local soft red bricks, white or cream render, and plain red clay roofing tiles.

Bricks – local soft orange red bricks

Render – usually paler creams and white which provides cohesion throughout the area.

Clay tiles – plain and bonnet red clay tiles

Windows and doors- most of the buildings have original wooden sash and casement windows and doors. Some properties have gabled dormers, including Mackerye End House.

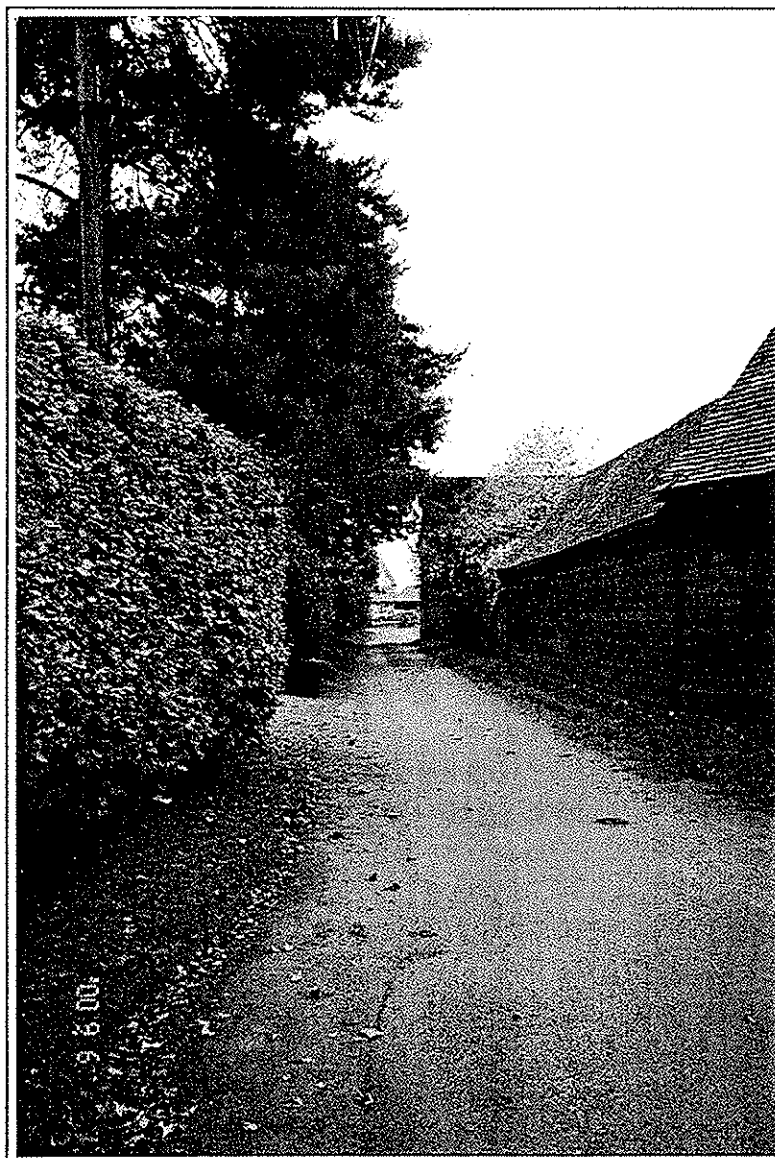
Weatherboarding – predominates as the facing material for agricultural and out-buildings in the area.

6.0 ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS

6.1 Much of the character of the conservation area is created through the combination of rural and residential usage and the very informal layout and verdant setting. The open spaces are generally enclosed with informal hedges, flint walls with brickwork copings and piers or wooden fences. Gardens in this area are in the main enclosed by hedges or simple wooden fences although there are some areas of plastic coated chain link fencing which are an alien feature in this otherwise rural area and create a negative and obtrusive feature.

6.2 Mackerye End House has imposing and finely detailed cast iron gates and trimmed hedges, which accentuate its significance within the village.

6.3 Another important element in the character of the area is its dispersed settlement pattern, this combined with the tree-lined winding roads provides enticing glimpses of buildings.



7.0 SIGNIFICANT VIEWS

7.1 Much of the character of the Mackerye End conservation area comes from its rural situation and its views out across open fields and countryside. There are many imposing views between the hedgerows out across towards the urban areas of Harpenden and Wheathampstead.

7.2 Important views from the conservation area are;

- the view out towards Harpenden between hedges from the road running past Little Manor into Mackerye End from Kimpton

- from the lane outside Little Manor towards the back of Mackerye End where there are some fine old trees, presumably part of the early parkland surrounding the house
- the views out from the footpath running along the eastern boundary of the conservation area
- the view through the hedge opposite Holly Bush Cottage out over gently sloping open countryside.
- general views along the roads within the village which offer inviting glimpses of greenery and the buildings beyond.

There are also important views back into the conservation area from the surrounding countryside.

8.0 TREES AND LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

8.1 The significant mature trees and surviving hedges are major contributors to the conservation area's setting, character and appearance. Many of the historic field boundaries still retain their hedgerows, which are also important wildlife habitats.

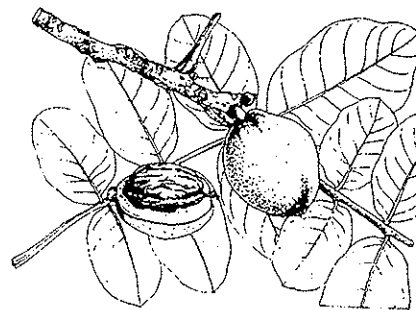
8.2 A small group of walnut trees, which have highly aromatic leaves, make an unusual and notable feature by the roadside opposite Holly Bush Cottage.

8.3 The boundaries and hedgerows of the conservation area mainly consist of native trees and shrubs including beech, holly, sloe, hawthorn and ash.

8.4 Most trees located in conservation areas are protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Six weeks prior written notice must be given to the local authority of any proposed surgery or felling. This period enables the Council to make a tree preservation order if it considers that the proposal is unacceptable.



Juglans regia
Common walnut



9.0 PROPOSALS FOR ENHANCEMENT

9.1 Opportunities for enhancement include the retention and re-introduction of traditional materials and techniques of repair. Any new development or change of use should respect the grain, setting, scale, materials and use of existing development or land.

9.2 Traditional boundary walls and fencing, especially the metal fencing along the boundary of Little Manor, and hedging form an important part of the character of the area

and should be retained and enhanced whenever possible. The use of plastic coated chain link fencing detracts from the character of the area and every effort should be made to replace this with more sympathetic and appropriate methods of fencing or hedging.

9.3 The use of UPVC windows and doors should be avoided and will not be acceptable for listed buildings and new development. Where replacement windows constitute permitted development they will be discouraged. UPVC windows and doors are not sympathetic replacements for traditional painted wooden painted doors and windows; they lack the fine detailed mouldings, which give a traditional appearance in character with the area.

10.0 SUMMARY

10.1 It is the Council's policy to encourage the retention of those features which it is felt make the conservation area special; including historic buildings; their historic and architectural features, and their settings, historic brick walls, metal estate style fences, wooden picket and close boarded fences and hedges. Every effort should be made to maintain landscape features, and spaces between buildings and landscape and to avoiding infilling such gaps.

10.2 If further advice or guidance is required please contact the Enterprise and Civic Environment Department, St Albans City and District Council Offices, PO Box 2, Civic Centre, St Albans, Herts, AL1 3JE. Tel. St Albans (01727) 866100.



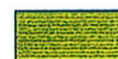
KEY



CONSERVATION AREA



STATUTORILY LISTED BUILDINGS



BUILDINGS OF LOCAL INTEREST



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TITLE: **MACKERYE END CONSERVATION AREA**

DRAWN: MJM

DATE: OCTOBER 2000

SCALE: Not to Scale

